to an agency offering better price at his doorstep. Within such an open and transparent arrangement there is no question of scope for employment or making the farmers bonded labours.

Amount received from the Union Carbide as compensation

†*611. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are still having the balance amount received from the Union Carbide as compensation;

(b) if so, details of such amount;

(c) the purpose for which this amount, if any, have been kept as reserve; and

(d) whether this amount would be made available to the Madhya Pradesh Government for the schemes being run for the welfare of gas victims?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The unspent amount is lying with the Reserve Bank of India in the name of the Welfare Commissioner.

(b) As informed by the Office of the Welfare Commissioner, Bhopal Gas Victims, Bhopal, an amount of approximately Rs. 1000.00 crores is lying with the Reserve Bank of India.

(c) This amount is being utilized for the distribution of compensation amount to the original claimants on *pro-rata* basis, in accordance with the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 19th July, 2004.

(d) No, Sir. In its judgement dated 19th July, 2004, the Supreme Court has directed the Welfare Commissioner to disburse the unspent amount only to the persons whose claims have been settled, on a *pro-rata* basis.

Assistance to Punjab for Fertilizers, Seeds, etc.

*612. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate any policy in consultation with Punjab Government to provide fertilizers, seeds and other agriculture equipments to farmers at reasonable prices; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.